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LETTERS

Intelligence Gathering

I am writing out of concern over the article by William E. Colby, "A New Charter for the C.I.A." (3/22). The number and diversity of groups opposed to the "National Intelligence Act of 1980" already speaks to the range of difficulties regarding the protection of rights in the document. It is the portion of the bill that concerns the use of private institutions which troubles me. Mr. Colby claims that "the Charter flatly bars the use of American media, academic, or religious cover for intelligence operations." In fact, this prohibition can be waived in time of war, or "during any period covered by a report from the President to the Congress under the War Powers Resolution, to the extent necessary to carry out the activity that is the subject of the report." (Section 132d). Further, while the use of religious institutions for cover is prohibited, the use of *bona fide* religious personnel for sources of information is not. The act allows the "voluntary exchange of information between any person and any entity of the intelligence community" (Section 132c). It makes no provisions about how such "voluntary contacts" may be solicited.

Those who recall the distress among mission groups of the Christian churches in 1975 will understand the renewed distress today over this provision. In testimony given before the Senate Select Intelligence Committee on Tuesday, March 25, the U.S. Catholic Mission Council, the Lutheran Council in the United States and the National Council of Churches all spoke against Section 132c or any version of an Intelligence Charter that does not prohibit any contact whatsoever between the intelligence community and missionaries.

Mr. Colby's position on this matter is illustrated by this quote from his response to a 1975 letter from Sr. Barbara Hendricks, M.M., Chair of the L.C.W.R. National Global Ministry Committee of the U.S. Catholic Mission Council protesting any links between the C.I.A. and missionaries. In his letter Mr. Colby states, "I assure you that in any connection this Agency (the C.I.A.) had with U.S. missionaries the missionaries themselves saw their activity as *wholly consistent* with their evangelizing and pastoral mission" (Italics mine).

The overwhelming evidence we have had from missionaries is that they do not view information gathering for U.S. intelligence agencies as *wholly consistent* with Christ's mission command to make disciples of all nations. We cannot agree with this assessment of the compatibility of a religious role and an in-

telligence role. When a missioner goes to another land, he or she must sever all connections with the sending country and must work with the people of the local community in an atmosphere of trust and service. The orientation of the missioner has to be to the place where he or she serves, not to the country of origin.

The charter now being considered by Congress is not the one which is needed by this country. This section which compromises the integrity of the evangelizing role of the missioner is but one example of the need to look more carefully at this piece of legislation.

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